

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC

COGARD

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

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COGARD FOR POLAD

TAGS: , XC, US

SUBJECT:APRIL 3 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. KENNEDY RELEASES ON SENATE FLOOR LEAKED CLASSIFIED
CABLE IN WHICH AMB. MARTIN ADVISED SECSTATE AGAINST
GIVING "AN HONEST AND DETAILED ANSWER" TO QUESTIONS
ON US POLICY IN SVN ASKED BY SENATOR. CABLE, DATED
MARCH 21, SAID IT WOULD BE "HEIGHT OF FOLLY" TO GIVE
INFO TO KENNEDY, WHOSE STAFF "WILL SPEARHEAD THIS EFFORT"
(TO REDUCE AID), AND URGED THAT HE BE GIVEN "A VERY
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SHORT REPLY." KENNEDY SEES CABLE AS OUTRAGE TO CONGRESS

BUT COMMENDS HAK FOR REJECTING MARTIN'S ADVICE AND PROVIDING CANDID AND RESPONSIVE ANSWERS. ADDS REGRET THAT SECRETARY'S "HONESTY AND WILLINGNESS TO CLARIFY US POLICY IS NOT SHARED BY OUR AMBASSADOR IN SAIGON" (AP, PHINQ)- DOS CALLS MARTIN'S CABLE AN INTERNAL RECOMMENDATION, SAYS LEAK IS "UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE WHICH WE DEPLORE" (AP, SUN). KENNEDY ADDS THAT MARTIN HAS ENGAGED IN "UNWARRANTED INTERFERENCE IN FIELD INVESTIGATIONS OF US FOREIGN AID EXPENDITURES" BY GAO (AP, CHITRIB). MORGAN (WP) NOTES THAT LEAK COMES IN MIDST OF GROWING CONTROVERSY BETWEEN DOD AND CONGRESS OVER EXTENT AND PURPOSE OF CONTINUED US AID TO

INDOCHINA. SAYS MARTIN IN CABLE ALSO DISPUTED AUTHORITY OF KENNEDY'S REFUGEE SUBCOMMITTEE TO CONDUCT INVESTIGATION OF US INDOCHINA POLICY. MORGAN DESCRIBES MARTIN AS TOUGH CAREER DIPLOMAT WHO STRONGLY SUPPORTS GVN WHILE RUNNING EMBASSY WITH A "TIGHT HAND" AND IMPOSING A "CURTAIN OF SECRECY" AROUND THE MISSION'S WORK. FINNEY (NYT) SAYS KENNEDY'S OFFICE RECEIVED A COPY OF THE CONFIDENTIAL CABLE, IN AN UNMARKED ENVELOPE, WITH THE DISTRIBUTION CUT OFF TO PREVENT IDENTIFICATION OF THE LEAK SOURCE. QUOTES DOS OFFICIAL THAT "SOMEBODY IS OBVIOUSLY OUT TO KNIFE GRAHAM MARTIN," DESCRIBES DOS AS IN "DITHER" OVER LEAK. CITES OFFICIAL SAYING THAT IT WAS WITHIN "PREROGATIVES" OF AMB. TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO REPLY TO INQUIRY, BUT SECSTATE "DECIDED OTHERWISE" AND PROVIDED SUBSTANTIVE REPLY. FINNEY REVIEWS CONTROVERSIAL MARCH 6 CABLE, ON EARLIER NYT SHIPLER ARTICLE, THAT PROMPTED KENNEDY LETTER TO SECSTATE THAT, IN TURN, EVOKED MARCH 21 TELEGRAM. STATES THAT MARTIN IS CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE WITHIN FS "PARTICULARLY AMONG SOME JUNIOR OFFICERS" WHO RESENT WHAT THEY SEE AS HIS "IMPERIOUS, SOMETIMES ARROGANT WAYS." KENNEDY PLACES TEXT OF MARTIN CABLE IN CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, SAYS IT RAISES "MOST PROFOUND QUESTIONS ABOUT WHICH COUNTRY AND WHOSE INTERESTS AMB. MARTIN IS TRULY REPRESENTING." (NYT CARRIES UPI TEXT OF CABLE).

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2. AT CEREMONY TO MARK LEGENDARY FOUNDING OF VN OVER 4000 YEARS AGO, THIEU DENOUNCES NVN LEADERS AS "BENT ON WAR" AND "BETRAYING NATIONAL HERITAGE" BY FORBIDDING PEOPLE TO CELEBRATE TRADITIONAL RITE AND TRYING TO IMPOSE "FOREIGN IDEOLOGY". CHARGES COMMUNISTS KILLED 15,000 GVN TROOPS SINCE C-F AND HOLD 26,000 POWS AND 70,000 CIVILIAN PRISONERS, AND INFILTRATED 100,000 MORE SOLDIERS INSTEAD OF WITHDRAWING 300,000. CALLS ON

COMMUNISTS TO STOP FIGHTING, RETURN TO C-F LINES, AND SET UP COMMITTEES TO DISCUSS GENERAL ELECTIONS (REUTER, NYT).

3. SHIPLER (NYT) FROM MONTAGNARD VILLAGE TELLS OF YOUNG EX-SOLDIER WHO FOUGHT WITH THE GREEN BERETS, LOVED THE LIFE AND NOW MISSES IT. HE LIKED AMERICANS AND "THEY LIKED US". SAYS HE TRIED TO JOIN ARVN BUT "FOR SOME REASON" HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND, THEY WILL NOT TAKE HIM. HE LIVES ON RELATIVELY PROSPEROUS FARM, IS NOT SURE IF WAR WILL EVER END, AND DOESN'T KNOW IF HE WANTS IT TO.

4. FANK SOURCES SAY GKR "REMAINED ON THE DEFENSIVE" AT OUDONG WHERE THEY HAD SOUGHT TO RETAKE CITY. REBELS KEEP UP PRESSURE ON KAMPOT (WP).

5. RLG AND PL AGREE ON COALITION, INFORMED SOURCES SAY NEW GOVT. WILL BE SWORN IN ON APRIL 5 (CSM). FOLLOWING MEETING WITH SOUVANNA, PL LEADER ANNOUNCES FORMATION OF LAOS' THIRD COALITION SINCE INDEPENDENCE. SOUPHANOUVONG WILL JOIN SOUVANNA THURSDAY FOR TRIP TO LUANG PRABANG WHERE NEW GOVT. WILL BE ENDORSED BY KING. RLG WILL GET MINISTRIES OF DEFENSE, FINANCE, EDUCATION, HEALTH AND INTERIOR; PL WILL GET FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ECONOMY AND PLANNING, INFO, PUBLIC WORKS AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS. CAPITAL SOURCES SAY SOUVANNA CONFIDENT THAT NEW COALITION WILL WORK (WP; AP, PHINQ). RED PRINCE ARRIVED FROM SAM NEUA YESTERDAY, WAS HONORED WITH RECEPTION AT WHICH HE HAILED PROGRESS TOWARD POLITICAL SETTLEMENT. PL OFFICIAL SAYS NEW COALITION IS "MORE REALISTIC" ABOUT "TRUE BALANCE OF POWER" IN LAOS. RLG OFFICIAL IN VIENTIANE SEES REDUCTION OF FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT AS IMPORTANT FACTOR. WESTERN DIPLOMATS UNCLASSIFIED

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EXPECT SOUVANNA TO REMAIN PREMIER FOR AT LEAST TWO YEARS BEFORE RETIRING IN FAVOR OF SOUPHANOUVONG OR "PERHAPS SOME OTHER PL LEADER." ABOUT 4000 THAI MERCENARY TROOPS REMAIN, BUT COMMANDER SAYS WILL BE WITHDRAWN WITHIN THREE MONTHS. SOUVANNA AIDE SAYS ECON AID DISCUSSIONS ARE UNDERWAY WITH USSR, PRC AND OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES AND FORMER AGREEMENT WITH SOVIETS "LIKELY TO BE PUT BACK IN FORCE." AT HANOI RECEPTION FOR RED PRINCE BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE, DRV ACTING PREMIER SHARPLY ATTACKED RECENT US DECLARATIONS OF SUPPORT FOR GVN, CALLS HAK STATEMENT A "FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER" OF C-F, CALLS ON US AND SVN TO COMPLY WITH C-F AND TO START "SERIOUS" TALKS ON RECENT PRG PROPOSAL FOR POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.

CHINA

6. MANSFIELD TELLS SENATE HE WILL SHORTLY INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO GRANT PRC MFN TREATMENT. DECLARES THAT PUTTING CHINA TRADE ON SAME BASIS AS TRADE WITH WEST EUROPE AND OTHER ALLIES IS WARRANTED BECAUSE US EXPORTS TO PRC HAVE EXCEEDED IMPORTS APPROXIMATELY 10-1 (CSM). LAUDING STATE OF SINO-US RELATIONS AS "OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT" OF ADMIN., SENATOR SAYS UNTAPPED OFFSHORE RESERVES MAY MAKE PRC "GREAT OIL EXPORTING POWER" IN YEARS AHEAD (UPI, PHINQ). RESPONDING TO MANSFIELD SPEECH, SEN. GRIFFIN LABELED MFN FOR PRC WORTH DISCUSSING, BUT ARGUED IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO CONSIDER CHINA SEPARATE FROM USSR; ADDED THAT PLAN "MIGHT GO DOWN THE DRAIN" IF CONGRESS ATTEMPTS LEGISLATING ON INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF EITHER NATION (UPI; REUTER, NYT, WP).

7. CSM'S SAIKOWSKI REPORTS THAT ISSUE OF SMUT-INFECTED US WHEAT SHIPPED TO PRC IS IRRITANT TO CHINESE AND IS "RUFFLING" US WHEAT TRADE WITH THEM. SAYS FOR SOME MONTHS NOW THEY HAVE BEEN "VOICING SERIOUS CONCERN" ABOUT THIS AND, ACCORDING INDUSTRY SOURCES, HAVE HELD SHIPS IN PORT LONG TIME AND RECENTLY TURNED BACK SEVERAL WHEAT CARGOES. DESPITE THIS, USG AND IUSTRY OFFICIALS SAY IT HAS NOT AFFECTED TRADE
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ACTIVITY AND HAS NO POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR SINO-US RELATIONS GENERALLY. PROBLEM ARISES FROM FACT THAT PRC HAS MORE SEVERE STANDARDS AND METHODS OF INSPECTION AND DEFINITIONS OF PURITY; US REGULATIONS ARE MORE LIBERAL, AND US GRAIN DEALERS DO NOT REGARD SMUT, AN ENDEMIC AND COMMON OCCURRENCE, AS SERIOUS - US MILLS ALWAYS WASH WHEAT BEFORE MILLING IT. BUT PRC HAS ONLY LIMITED FUMIGATING FACILITIES AND CONSIDERS SMUT-CONTAMINATED GRAIN A DANGER TO ITS OWN CROP -- WHICH USDA DOUBTS. ACCORDING INDUSTRY SOURCES, US SCIENTIST FROM UTAH U SENT TO PEKING
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